

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5513

As Passed Senate, March 5, 2007

Title: An act relating to establishing a state government efficiency hotline.

Brief Description: Establishing a state government efficiency hotline.

Sponsors: Senators Kilmer, Holmquist, Hobbs, Marr, Oemig, Hatfield, McAuliffe and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Economic Development, Trade & Management: 2/02/07 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/05/07, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE & MANAGEMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Kilmer, Vice Chair; Clements, Kauffman and Shin.

Staff: Jacob White (786-7448)

Background: The State Auditor's duties include investigating improper governmental activity. Currently, the State Auditor operates the constituent referral program which allows the public to phone a general 1-800 phone number with complaints about the government, such as waste and inefficiency. The public is also able to file complaints through the State Auditor's website.

Summary of Engrossed Bill: Within existing funds, the State Auditor is required to establish a toll-free telephone line for public employees and members of the public to recommend measures to improve efficiency in state and local government and to report waste, inefficiency, abuse, efficiency or outstanding achievement by state and local agencies, public employees, or persons under contract with state and local agencies.

The State Auditor is required to: prepare and make available information explaining the purpose of the hotline; designate staff to be responsible for processing the recommendations from the hotline; conduct an initial review of each recommendation; decide which recommendations require further examination; prepare a written determination of the results of the investigation; make public the conclusions of this determination and distribute the conclusions to the affected agencies; and provide an annual overview and update of hotline investigations to the appropriate legislative committees.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The identity of the person making the recommendation is confidential, unless that person signs a written waiver or until the investigation is complete. All documents related to the report and investigation must also be kept confidential until the completion of the investigation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill takes what has worked well for years for the State Auditor and formalizes it. It also allows the State Auditor to publish their findings, which will make that information more readily available to the public. The ability to be open with the public is essential to the government. Also, this program will come at no increase cost to tax payers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Brian Sonntag, State Auditor.